

House Republican Press Release

March 27, 2006
Press Office: 860-240-8700

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE BACKS ANTI-CORRUPTION PROVISIONS SUBMITTED BY REPRESENTATIVE FREY



Proposal would allow courts to revoke pensions of convicted officials

HARTFORD—On Friday, March 24, the Legislature's Government, Administration and Elections Committee approved legislation containing provisions introduced by State Representative John H. Frey, R-Ridgefield, that would allow the state to revoke pensions of state officials convicted of corruption charges. Senate Bill 487, An Act Revising Certain Ethics And Campaign Finance Statutes, now goes before the full State Senate for consideration.

At the start of the 2006 Legislative Session, Rep. Frey submitted his recommendation to committee leaders for the provisions, which were incorporated into SB 487. They would specifically allow courts to revoke or reduce pensions and health benefits of as part of a sentence for any state official convicted of corruption charges. A court would be required to take into account the: severity of the crime, amount of monetary loss stemming from the corruption, and degree of public trust placed in the official.

Additional provisions would allow courts to send payments of pension and health benefits that would have gone to the official to the state or a municipal government to serve as restitution for any monetary loss from crimes involving corruption.

"Taxpayers ultimately foot the bill for pensions and health benefits of state employees, including elected officials," said Rep. Frey, who serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. "Clearly, they should not have to cover those for people who engaged in corruption. Connecticut has seen a rash of corruption-related crimes in recent years on both the state and local level. By enacting the ability to strip away pensions, we send a clear message to anyone tempted to engage in corruption that not only do you face losing your job and incarceration, but you can also lose the benefits you count on in years to come."

Rep. Frey added that his proposal contained measures that would impact pensions and benefits for municipal officials but the committee did not include them in SB 487. While municipal employees would be subject to the pension and health benefit revocation measures in the bill, locally-elected officials would not.

“I’m hopeful that we will be able to address similar issues for municipal officials in future legislation,” said Rep. Frey. “However, there is nothing in state statute preventing a town or city from approving such measures on its own.”